

Drug Trafficking Indictment Of Torrijos' Brother Cited

The federal government indicted the brother of Panamanian Gen. Omar Torrijos for heroin trafficking and U.S. narcotics agents tried to arrest him but failed, says a document released yesterday by the Senate Judiciary subcommittee on separation of powers.

Allegations of drug trafficking by Torrijos, his family and members of his administration have surfaced in the debate over the controversial Panama Canal treaties. The Senate will meet in closed session Tuesday to discuss them.

Leland Riggs, a retired special agent of the Drug Enforcement Administration, said in an affidavit he was placed on a heroin smuggling case in June 1972, involving Omar Torrijos' brother, Moises.

The incident stemmed from a July 8, 1971, heroin raid at Kennedy Airport in New York, when agents arrested Rafael Richard, son of Panama's ambassador to Taiwan, and Nicholas Polanco, a reported chauffeur/bodyguard of Moises Torrijos, Riggs said.

Riggs said subsequent investigation led to indictment of Moises by a federal grand jury in the eastern district of New York as a "co-conspirator."

Riggs said he tried to arrest Moises Torrijos in the event he traveled from Spain through the U.S. controlled Panama Canal Zone. But Moises Torrijos apparently learned of the plan and returned to Panama via Caracas.